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## HELEN IN INDIA.<sup>1</sup>

The strongest of all reasons for the study of Greek is genealogical. English poetry is so picked out with the gold threads of Grecian story that only the knower of Greek can enjoy to the fullest the literature of his own language. Greek literature, which is ultimately Homer, is the ancestral trunk of much of the best of our own. There may be, it is true, scientific, that is to say, philological debate whether we should say Homer, or the Homeric poems; but to the literary man, to Mr. Andrew Lang, there can be only Homer, the eternal Homer.

"Eternal" is no light epithet; there are older literary remains than Greece has bequeathed us, — the Semitic monuments, the hymns of the Vedas; but when once their essential kernel of fact has been abstracted, their chief interest for Occidentals will be over and gone. Greece, on the other hand, stands for perfection of form in literature as in sculpture, and so must ever be the concern of the artist as well as of the student. In literature Homer is the well to which the pitcher must go.

Most closely akin to the modern taste is the Odyssey, which, as a boy's book of adventure, is no less interesting than Robinson Crusoe, and, as a book of fairy tales, surpasses, to my mind any modern collection. The Iliad, on the contrary, is a book of war, duller in its details, modern somewhat as being the story of a truant wife, but not completely *fin de siècle*, for that the truant lady is reconciled to her deserted lord. How modern both stories are in their plotting, or rather, how unchanging is life! Ulysses and Penelope find a modern parallel in Enoch Arden and Annie, but the Grecian woman of yore was truer to her wandering

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<sup>1</sup> This sketch is based on a technical paper by the author on the "Aryan Divinity of Lightning", which is publishing in the *American Journal of Philology*, xvii., No. 1, (B. L. Gildersleeve, editor, Baltimore, Maryland).

spouse ; haply she did flirt a trifle with her suitors, but in this case flirting was self-defense, to keep them all at a distance. Helen is the eloping wife. We blame her, but she is the more fascinating. It is one of the freaks of our understanding that the *Odyssey* is our favorite poem, but no figure in it, barring the simple-sweet *Nausicaa*, takes such a hold on our fancy as Hector, the hero of disaster, to whom the boon of death — more glorious than a *Troia rediviva* in Italy, — was allotted by the gods, and Helen who *is* Beauty, forever and evermore.

In illustration of this point, and to give in advance some of the less-known details of the Helen-myth which we shall presently have to discuss, I cite a few passages from contemporary English poetry. But in order to show the extent of our inheritance from our Homeric ancestry, I will begin by making a citation of rare beauty from Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, written almost three full centuries ago, where *Faustus* apostrophizes a vision of Helen as follows (Act V, sc. 1, end) :

“Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,  
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?—  
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.—  
Her lips suck forth my soul: see, where it flies!—  
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.  
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,  
And all is dross that is not Helena.  
I will be Paris, and for love of thee  
Instead of Troy, shall Wertenberg be sacked;  
And I will combat with weak Menelaus,  
And wear thy colours on my plumèd crest;  
Yea, I will wound Achilles in the heel,  
And then return to Helen for a kiss.  
O, thou art fairer than the evening air  
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;  
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter  
When he appeared to hapless Semele;  
More lovely than the monarch of the sky  
In wanton Arethusa's azur'd arms;  
And none but thou shalt be my paramour.”

My next citation is from Tennyson's "Dream of Fair Women":

"At length I saw a lady within call,  
Stillter than chiselled marble, standing there;  
A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,  
And most divinely fair."

Further on he represents Helen as saying:

"I had great beauty; ask thou not my name:  
No one can be more wise than destiny,  
Many drew swords and died. Where'er I came  
I brought calamity.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I would the white cold heavy-plunging foam  
Whirl'd by the wind, had rolled me deep below  
Then when I left my home."

Browning, in "Fifine at the Fair" (xx.) says:

"See, Helen! pushed in front o' the world's woost night and storm,  
By Lady Venus' hand on shoulder: the sweet form  
Shrinkingly prominent, though mighty, like a moon  
Outbreaking from a cloud, to put harsh things in tune,  
And magically bring mankind to acquiesce  
In its own ravage—"

Further on (Fifine xxvii.) the Helen-myth is related in one of its less usual forms, the form that Euripides followed in his play of *Helena*:

"Well, it may be, the name of Helen brought to mind  
A certain myth I mused in years long left behind:  
How she that fled from Greece with Paris whom she loved,  
And came to Troy, and there found shelter, and so proved  
Such cause of the world's woe,—how she, old stories call  
This creature, Helen's self, never saw Troy at all.  
Jove had his fancy-fit, must needs take empty air,  
Fashion her likeness forth, and set the phantom there  
I' the midst, for sport, to try conclusions with the blind  
And blundering race, the game create for gods, mankind:  
Experiment on these,—establish who would yearn  
To give up life for her, who, other-minded, spurn  
The best her eyes could smile,—make half the world sublime  
And half absurd, for just a phantom all the time!  
Meanwhile true Helen's self sat safe and far away,  
By a great river-side, beneath a purer day,  
With solitude around, tranquility within;

Was able to lean forth, look, listen, through the din  
 And stir; could estimate the worthlessness or worth  
 Of Helen who inspired such passion to the earth,  
 A phantom all the time."

I cite from Lewis Morris (Helen, in the "Epic of Hades") one passage more, for a detail of Helen's life before her marriage to Menelaos. After assigning to Helen a part in a boy-and-girl love affair, the poet goes on:

"Ah days too fair to last! There came a night  
 When I lay longing for my love, and knew  
 Sudden the clang of hoofs, the broken doors,  
 The clash of swords, the shouts, the groans, the stain  
 Of red upon the marble, the fixed gaze  
 Of dead and dying eyes,—that was the time  
 When first I looked on death,—and when I woke  
 From my deep swoon, I felt the night air cool  
 Upon my brow, and the cold stars look down  
 As swift we galloped o'er the darkling plain;  
 And saw the chill sea glimpses slowly wake,  
 With arms unknown around me. When the dawn  
 Broke swift, we panted on the pathless steeps,  
 And so by plain and mountain till we came  
 To Athens, where they kept me till I grew  
 Fairer with every year, and many wooed  
 Heroes and chieftains, but I loved not one."

I call attention to this detail of a forced elopement with Theseus to Athens, prior to her elopement, as Menelaos's wife, with Paris, to Troy. Helen would seem to have been a very run-a-gate young woman.

Was she a young woman at all? The discussion of this question does not in any case involve the denial that the story of the Trojan war was based on some historic conflict between Greece and Asia Minor. Helen's appearance in the Thesean cycle of legends as well as in the Trojan would seem almost of itself to suggest that she was not an individual but an impersonation. It is worth noting that in both cycles she is implicated in an elopement. To the Greeks Helen was at least half-goddess. The story of her birth is wondrous entangled. Her mother, Leda, was embraced on the same night by Zeus, the high-god of the Hellenes, and by her earthly lord, Tyndareos. She subse-

quently bore four children, Castor and Polydeukes, boys, and Helen and Clytaemnestra, girls, each being variously allotted to the two fathers, Helen and the two boys being triplets by Zeus in one account, Helen and Pollux being the semi-divine twins by another.

Let us here tabulate, so far as it is purely Greek, the Helen-myth, according to its *Dramatis Personæ*, and its Dramatic Incidents:

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

- I. *Helen*, daughter of Tyndareos, and wife of Menelaos.
- II. *Tyndareos*, father of Helen.
- III. *Polydeukes* and *Helen*, twins by Zeus.
- IV. *Castor* and *Clytaemnestra*, twins by Tyndareos.
- V. *Menelaos*, the "yellow one", husband of Helen.

DRAMATIC INCIDENTS.

- VI. All the Grecian princes come to the court of Tyndareos to woo Helen.
- VII. Helen deserts her husband.
- VIII. Not the true Helen, but a woman just like her went with Paris, while the true Helen entirely disappeared.
- IX. Helen is recovered by her husband, Menelaos, who goes to her rescue disguised and concealed in the belly of a horse.

If the Helen of this myth was not an actual woman, but a goddess, it may be that we are to seek for her, not in Greece alone, but in the kindred literatures. It is therefore to a myth of great similarity in the Vedas, to which I will invite your attention, but first, a few words on the methods of linguistic comparison.

Students of Latin and Greek must of course have noticed all along, as the Romans themselves noticed, the identity of many of their words, for example the names of relationship, say, *mater*, "mother", and the numerals, say, Greek *deka*, Latin *decem*, "ten"; but the impetus to such comparisons came from the exploitation of Sanskrit through the labors of Sir William Jones and others of the English officials concerned with the management of India about the close of the last century. Sanskrit was the language out of which the modern Hindu idioms sprang, to which they are related as the Romance languages are to Latin. Further Sanskrit, like Latin, was the sacred lan-

guage, still in vogue with the Brahmin priests, who had received it *viva voce* in learning their ancient sacred texts by heart. In Sanskrit also such verbal correspondences were observed, thus, *mātar* "mother", and *daca*, "ten". These correspondences were not confined to the names of relationship and to the numerals, but extended in general to words of every sort. Sir William Jones announced, as long ago as 1786, the inevitable conclusion, that Sanskrit, Greek and Latin were cognate languages, proceeding from some common source, a source perhaps no longer extant. This announcement was but the infant's cry at the birth of a new science, the "Comparative Philology of the Indo-European Tongues," which I call, for myself, "Aryan Linguistics."

With such purely empirical observations as those just described linguistic science in our modern sense may be said to have begun. All was guessing at first, wild or sober, according to the temperament of the guesser. The field was a good one for shrewdness, for imagination, and the best was merely subjective, the test of probability. Franz Bopp, who was the founder of the science, as Jones was its projector, was not satisfied to point out the bare cognation of words, but sought to resolve words into their elements. Thus in Greek *didōmi* = Sanskrit *dadāmi* "I give", he did not stop short with recognizing *mi* as a first person ending, but went on, by comparing it with the accusative *me*, "me" of the first person pronoun, to see in it a veritable pronoun merged into the flexion of the verb by agglutination. In a like manner he sought to explain all the person endings of the verb, and so be in, as it were, at the birth of flexion. It seemed possible in this way to reduce all words to complexes of sensible parts, and so dissect out a skelton common to the entire kindred group. There was promise of help here in the art of acquiring languages, but this fond dream was delusive. It is said that the young German scholars of this period when the enthusiasm for Comparative Linguistics was at its height, proved, after they had found their way to

teaching posts in the gymnasia, deficient in the microscopic lore elaborated for centuries previous by the literary-historical philologists.

Of the random guesses of this initial period of great enthusiasm a certain number met universal acceptance. Some of the cognations recognized left no ground for reasonable doubt, and were elevated to the rank of facts. Some two decades ago a group of younger scholars, now yclept "young grammarians", adopted a program of greater strictness for linguistic studies. They pitched overboard all such speculations as that mentioned of Bopp's, viz: the identification of the first person ending of a verb with the first person pronoun, and labelled them with the epithet glottogonic. The inferences from incontestible etymologies could enable us, they said, to reconstruct the primitive parent speech at the time of its breaking up, but did not warrant any guesses for a still more primitive time. Their cardinal principle, however, was that a sound-change attested by perfectly certain etymologies was invariable, in other words, that the phonetic laws were inviolable.

Let us ask ourselves what a phonetic law is. In a comparison of words such as Sanskrit *mātar*, Latin and Doric Greek *māter*, "mother", each sound is regarded as a unit; thus four separate phonetic laws tell us that in these three languages *m ā t r* are not liable to change, but in *mēter* of Attic-Ionic Greek *ā* becomes *ē*, each of these laws being without exception; the fifth law is that Sanskrit *ā* equals Latin-Greek *ē*, and this *ē*, on grounds too minute to give here, is assigned to the parent speech, for which the conventional writing *māter* has been devised.

The gain to linguistics from the strict observance of the principles of sound change observed in incontestably kindred words has been great. I cite for example the equation of Greek *PARTHEN-os*, "girl", with Latin *VIRGIN-is* "of a girl." Here by the strictest construction of the phonetic laws all of the sounds in the stem of these words are absolutely identical, barring the second letters *a* and *i*. The difference



in these two letters is susceptible to more than one explanation, but simplest for our purpose is to say that *virgo*, "girl", has been associated in the Roman mind with *vir*, "man". Here we have reached a check on the principle of the Invariability of Phonetic Law, which we may formulate by saying that normal phonetic change may be deflected by analogical association. On these two principles, according to the strictest school of inquirers, hang all the law and the prophets of the law. Accordingly on every inquirer is laid the task of substantiating any new doctrine as not in conflict with phonetic law, or else to give a good analogical reason for such a conflict. Before leaving our example, I call attention to the fact that no mere guessing could have brought us on the one hand the equation of *parthen* with *virgin*, while, on the other hand, the most rigid construction of the phonetic laws compels the separation of words of great apparent likeness, e. g., of Greek *theos* and Latin *deus*, "god", which are to the eye very similar.

These simple examples will show what is meant by the Invariability of Phonetic Law.

To the general reader, however, the methods and processes of linguistics cannot be expected to be interesting. He may feel some sympathy with the results. It is obvious that, if all the descendants of the parent-speech possess common names of relationships, extending beyond the immediate family to the relations by marriage, that these names existed in the parent-speech, and that the organization of the family must have been perfected in the parent-tribe. The common numerals tell us that our savage ancestors could count at least as far as nine hundred and ninety-nine. Just so we are able to gather what minerals the parent-tribe employed, what plants they knew the properties of, what animals they had domesticated. From these and like details we may outline for ourselves a picture of the primitive state of civilization. The processes employed in limning this picture are just those practiced by the geologists in building up from single fossil bones entire skeletons

of animals long since perished. In these aspects linguistic science has been called Linguistic Paleontology.

Further the results gained in this way join hand in hand with the finds of the antiquarian ethnologist who applies pick and shovel to grubbing into the remains of the pile-houses constructed ages ago in Switzerland, and of the kitchen-middens of Norway: thus by the grubbing for fossil-roots of savage words, and for fossil-pots of savage cooks, we may brew a magic pottage that gives us retrospective glimpses and visions of the state of primitive culture.

In an inquiry into the primitive civilization of course the question of the *religious* notions of that period presses upon our attention. In the early stages of linguistics there was great enthusiasm in this field. The supreme god of Greece, *Zeus*, was compared with a minor god of the Vedas, *Dyāus*; this comparison was all the more convincing because the epithet "father" was nearly associated with each of them. Thus Latin *Ju-piter*, in the poets, *Diespiter*, was brought into the chain with *Zeuspater* and *Dyāuspētar*. While Zeus and Jupiter were the lightning-wielders, Dyāus was often only a common noun meaning "sky". This observation sent a flash of light about the nature of the god; we could understand how Horace's hunter could remain *sub Jove frigido*, if this meant "under the chill sky". It became clear that the high god of the Greeks and Romans was the Sky, more and more personified till his primitive nature was lost to sight, and only the anthropomorphic personation remained.

It was a great gain to investigation to reach a reasonable certainty that the head of the Olympic pantheon was but the elevation of a natural phenomenon to personality. Here mythological science had a firm basis to build upon.

The effort was of course made long ago to correlate the Homeric and Vedic myths. The battles around Troy were compared with the Vedic storm-myth, where Indra, the thunderer, is ever battling against a serpent creature, *Ahi-Vritra*, whose fortress is in the threatening clouds that rain

not, for that the serpent has bound them up till Indra pierces them through and through with his thunderbolts. The serpent's stronghold was called *Vilu*, which was compared with (*V*)*Ilium*; the stronghold was mighty (*dridha*), and with this *Dardania* was connected. Indra as the slayer of Vritra, i. e., *Vritrahan*, was brilliantly correlated with Bellerophon, a Grecian slayer of dragons. None of these comparisons, however, precisely fadges with the phonetic laws, and so they have been given up by the linguisticians.

The mythologists have worked on with the problem, functionally identifying Greek and Vedic divinities. One of the clearest cases of functional identity exists between the Greek twins, the Dioskouroi, Castor, the horseman, and Pollux, the boxer, and the Vedic "horsemen", the Acvins, twins also with no individual names in the Veda. Here no identity of names has yet been pointed out, though all are agreed as to the functional correspondence of these twin deities.

Considering the large amount of common vocabulary showed by Greek and Sanskrit, the instances are suprisingly scanty where there is a correspondence in the names of divinities. With linguistic students general likenesses in function do not count, identity in name and marked similarity in detail are wanted. Thus it happens that only a few divinities are recognized as common to the Greeks and Hindus. Besides the case of Jupiter already discussed, Roman mythology offers scarcely any other save that of the dawn goddess, *Aurora*, with Homeric *Hēōs* and Vedic *Usas*. Here the phonetic conditions, though satisfactory to the technical linguisticians, probably do not appeal to the popular ear or eye. In Greek mythology, Hermes, the messenger of the gods, corresponds with the Vedic goddess *Saramā*, who was sent by Indra after his stolen cows, the clouds. It will be remembered that Hermes was himself renowned for having stolen the cows of Apollo. Here, though there is a complete inversion of rôles, yet the dramatic *motif* of the stealing of the cows is the same. Of less per-

fect phonetic correspondence, but still highly plausible, is the comparison of the dog *Kerberos*, who was guardian at the gate of Hades, with the Vedic *Cabala*, one of two such guardians of the Hindu realm of the dead. It may be noted that *Çabala* was also called *Sārameya*, son of *Saramā*, and it is with this patronymic that the full Greek form *Hermeias* phonetically corresponds. As conductor of the dead to Hades we can see how *Hermeias* functionally corresponds with *Sārameya*, as well as with *Saramā*.

Another valuable contribution from Sanskrit to Greek mythology has been in the explanation of Prometheus, the bringer down of fire from heaven to mankind. Among the Hindus fire was made friction-wise by drilling a hard stick rapidly around in the orifice of a pithy stick. This act was described by the verb *manthati*, "he churns", and in classical Sanskrit *pramantha* is the name of the "churning-stick". Prometheus is declared to be the personified "churning-stick", and though I find for myself some phonetic difficulties in the way, this seems to me highly plausible.

With so much by way of preliminary explanation I turn to my task of pointing out the Helen-myth in India. The Vedic form of it will be found to show not only very marked correspondences in details, but also strong similarity in names. I will first lay before my readers the story of *Saranyū*, so far as it is told us in the Rig Veda, with some added details from the subsequent literature. I shall present the material in the words of Professor Lanman, of Harvard, making excerpts from his Sanskrit Reader (Notes, p. 381), and in the words of Professor Bloomfield, of Johns Hopkins, citing from an essay of his on *Saranyū* in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (Vol. xv., pp. 172, sq.).

All that the Rig Veda offers us is two stanzas standing at the beginning of a funeral hymn (R. V. x. 17). One may be tempted to deny to these verses all right to a place in their hymn, but the feeling for unity in the Vedic bards was easily satisfied: the mention of *Yama*, the Pluto who

ruled over the Vedic abode of the dead, was ample justification for incorporating the story of his parentage into a funeral hymn. It is safe to say that but for these two Vedic stanzas, the story of *Saranyū* would never have been registered in Sanskrit literature. Thus it seems almost a blind accident that we have any mention whatever of the Vedic Helen. Professor Lanman's translation of the stanzas is as follows:

“‘Tvastar's making a wedding for his daughter’—  
At this news all the world here comes together,  
Yama's mother, during her wedding,  
The wife of mighty Vivasvat, vanished.  
  
They hid away the immortal from mortals,  
Making a like one they gave her to Vivasvat.  
And she bare the two Aṅvins when that happened,  
And left two pairs behind her—*Saranyū*.”

He goes on to comment: “‘A braw story but unco short’”. The actual text is tantalizingly fragmentary. We can hardly hope to recover the legend with any satisfactory completeness. Yāska [an early Vedic lexicographer and commentator] gives it thus:

“Tvastar's daughter, *Saranyū*, bare twins (*Yama* and *Yamī*) to *Vivasvat*. She foisted upon him another female of the same appearance, and, taking on the form of a mare, fled forth. *Vivasvat* took on the form of a horse, followed her, and coupled with her. From that were born the two Aṅvins or ‘Horsemen’”.

The story is told with a little more detail in *Çānnaka*, a later Sanskrit writer. Here I extract from Professor Bloomfield's essay the following:

Tvastar had twin children, *Saranyū* and *Triṅiras*. He of his own accord gave *Saranyū* in marriage to *Vivasvat*. Then *Saranyū* bare to *Vivasvat* *Yama* and *Yami*. These two were also twins. Without the knowledge of her husband she created a woman like herself, foisted her twin children upon her, and, turning herself into a mare, fled. . . . [*Vivasvat*], discovering that the real *Saranyū* had gone away, quickly followed the daughter of *Tvastar*, having assumed the form of a horse with qualities corresponding to hers. . . . From this act sprang the two *Kumāras* . . . who are known as ‘horsemen.’”

Professor Bloomfield has explained the original passage

in Rig Veda as being of a riddling sort, a sort of theological quizz, in which well-known details are set forth in the form of questions, until the name Saranyū at the end flashes back the answer to all the implied questions. The stories in Çānnaka and Yāska really add nothing, they but explain the suppressed subjects of one or two verbs.

Before putting this material in tabular form a few words must first be spoken as to the marriage of Saranyū. This may after all have been a wedding-pageant in which the bride was to choose her husband after a sort of tourney in which the suitors must exhibit their prowess. In this case it was the suitors to whom allusion is made in the phrase "all the world comes together." We know that this sort of marriage was a Hindu institution. It was after such a tourney, or self-choice (*Svayamara*) ceremonial, that Princess Damayanti espoused Nala in the great Hindu epic. Just such tourneys were also in vogue in Greece. Thus it is recorded that Penelope, who was cousin to Helen, was so thronged by suitors that her father, Icarius, instituted a contest among them in which Ulysses won the palm and the bride by his success in racing.

Here let us look into the details of the myth of Saranyū :

#### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

- I. *Saranyū*, daughter of Tvastar and wife of Vivasvat.
- II. *Tvastar*, her father.
- III. The *Açvins*, her twin sons, the "horsemen."
- IV. *Tama* and *Tami*, another pair of twins.
- V. *Vivasvat*, "the shining one", her husband.

#### DRAMATIC INCIDENTS.

- VI. Tvastar makes a great wedding-pageant for his daughter, to which "all the world came", possibly as her suitors.
- VII. Saranyū deserts her husband, taking on her the form of a mare.
- VIII. The gods made a woman just like her to take her place with her husband.
- IX. The husband recovered her by taking upon himself the guise of a horse.

The reader will of course observe that the two myths have been symmetrically arranged in their tabulated forms. He will, I believe, be bound to agree that the two stories

present some marked similarities of detail. I observe that the agreement in the names gives in the first place strong ground for the conviction of the identity of the two myths. All the names, to be sure, do not correspond. In the discussion that follows touching each of the nine heads under which the myths have been arranged, the phonetic identity of the names will be shown by the use of small capitals, where the reader will understand that the strictest possible adherence to the phonetic laws is rendered, while the use of italics will show that the phonetic relations, though abnormal, are susceptible of a palliating explanation.

I. SARAN-yū = HELEN-ā. In these names only the suffixes are different, a difference not more marked than in *Aurora* beside Greek *Hēōs*.

II. TVA[s]tAR = TUNDAR-eos. It will be seen that the Greek name has an additional suffix.

III. The Acvins have in the Rig Veda no fixed individual names. One of the epithets that preëminently belongs to them is *Purudans-as-ā*. The kinship of this with the Greek name of Pollux is shown in the following equation :  
PURUDANS-ASĀ = POLUDEUK-ES.

It may be noted that the final *ā* of the Sanskrit word is a mere case ending, and thus the identity of the two words is complete in eight out of ten of its sounds, with at least a half-identity in the ninth — say 85 % strong.

III and IV. Very significant in both myths is the rôle of twins. The corresponding pairs are Castor and Pollux for the Greek and the Acvins for the Vedic myth. The fact that in one case they are brothers, and in the other case sons of the heroine makes no difference so far as the *motif* is concerned. This reversal of rôles is not different in any way from the reversal noticed already in the Hermes myth. Both myths have two pairs of twins, to say nothing of Saranyū being herself one of a pair, with a brother *Triçiras*, "Three-head." We may see here how, in the Greek myth, Helen may have come to be one with three others in a quartuplet.

V. The name Menelaos is in no wise related to Vivasvat, so far as I can see. Menelaos has however an epithet, *Xanthus*, of which, among the Greeks, he is the well-nigh exclusive possessor, for, in thirty-four cases, it is applied to him thirty-one times. Now *Xanthus* means "shining", which is the precise signification of Vivasvat. Thus, while the names of the two husbands do not agree, their description does agree perfectly as to one marked characteristic.

VI. Both Saranyū and Helen were married after a great wedding-pageant, instituted for the former by her father, certainly, and probably instituted by Tyndareos for Helen if we may judge by the parallel case of Penelope and Icarius mentioned above.

VII. Both women desert their husbands; as to Helen only are we told that it was for a lover. Helen seems indeed to be typical of much marrying; witness her carrying off by Theseus.

VIII. The gods created a double for each of the eloping wives, foisted in Saranyū's case upon her husband, and in Helen's upon her lover. Here again the *motif* is identical, spite of the change of rôles.

IX. The recovery of Saranyū, who had taken the form of a horse, was effected by her husband's also taking that guise. In the Grecian story the personification is too far advanced for such a metamorphosis, but the identical *motif* recurs where Menelaos gets into Troy to recover Helen, his wife, disguised in the belly of a horse. As a stratagem of real war the wooden horse was of course a flat impossibility. I seem to myself to be able to interpret it sensibly now for the first time when I see in the wooden horse an anthropomorphic device taking the place of an earlier metamorphosis in which a horse was the transformation guise of a demigod.

So much for a presentation of the evidence. The reader will see for himself that the two myths show a remarkable coincidence in the names of their *dramatis personæ* as well



as in extraordinary dramatic incidents. The coincidence in names points most probably to a common origin of the myths in the primitive Aryan period, or at any rate prior to the separation of the Hellenic and Indo-Iranic families.

It remains for us to speak of the interpretation of the myth into terms of natural phenomena. Saranyū has been explained as the Dawn, as the Fleet-Night, as the Storm-Cloud, while the Acvins are declared to be the Morning-Twilight-Twins. On etymological grounds I incline to the identification of Saranyū with the Storm-Cloud, though I define her more narrowly as "Lightning," while in the Acvins I see Thunder-and-Lightning.

One point is, however, always to be borne in mind: before the crystallization of our myth into its present form Helen-Saranyū had been brought down to earth. This is shown by the mode of her marriage, where the anthropomorphosis is complete. So, we can make no conclusive inferences from the details of the myth back to its origin. In this connection I would cite an able passage from Professor Bloomfield's essay:

"It is a prime need of mythological investigation, and one which has certainly been neglected in the past, to draw a sharp line of demarcation between the primary attributes of a mythological personage which furnish the causes of the personification, and the attributes and events which are assigned, or are supposed to happen after the anthropomorphosis has been completed. He who would search for the primary qualities of the Greek Zeus, as explained e. g. in the formula *sub Iove frigido*, in every action and attribute of the Homeric Zeus necessarily errs; his error is likely to be as great at some points as is his who would look for naturalistic events and physical phenomena in the actions of the Hellenic gods in a play of Euripides, where the gods are afflicted with all the passions and weaknesses of mortal men."

To the student of culture far and away more important than the identification of Saranyū with some natural phenomenon is the proof furnished by the comparison of our two myths that our primitive Aryan ancestors while still in their savage state had, at least for women of rank in a patriarchy, a form of "self-choice" marriage.

But it is in none of these pragmatistical aspects that Helen

is eternal. Is it not because of the sub-conscious pantheism in all poetry, our latent feeling of the God-in-us? The chivalry of a few centuries ago turned woman into a goddess, as we half suspect, with a touch of sub-conscious cynicism ; for did not Launcelot debauch Guinevere? But the knights of Agamemnon's Table Round had wooed a goddess turned woman, and when she was seduced, avenged her on the seducer and his folk. Now, why do we pardon Helen who spare not Guinevere? Maybe, our Aryan blood, Aryan still in spite of time, sees in our Helen, stripped of all allegory, some Aurora of the Night, some Lightning-Flash out of the blackness of the storm, "Divinely tall, and most divinely fair."

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